

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 244455

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH VIEWS ON SAHARA SITUATION

1. JUAN JOSE ROVIRA, SPANISH AMBASSADOR AT LARGE, AND JUAN DURAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR NORTH AMERICAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS IN THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTRY, MET WITH NEA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAY SEPT 30 FOR DISCUSSION OF SAHARA PROBLEM. ROVIRA AND DURAN NOTED AT OUTSET THAT SINCE SAHARA IS NOT WITHIN THEIR PRESENT AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY MAIN PURPOSE IN SEEKING MEETING WAS TO GET U.S. ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION.

2. THE PAIR EXPRESSED LITTLE DISAGREEMENT WITH U.S. VIEW THAT ESCALATION OF SAHARA CONFLICT IS UNLIKELY IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THEY POINTED TO LACK OF ENTHUSIASM WITHIN ALGERIA FOR GOVERNMENT'S SAHARA POLICY AND OBSERVED
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THAT THE SOVIETS SEEM NOT TO BE GIVING STRONG SUPPORT TO

ALGERIA BUT RATHER MAY FEEL THAT THERE IS A GREATER LONG RANGE INTEREST IN MAINTAINING TIES WITH MOROCCO WHERE THE POSSIBILITY OF A REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE SUSCEPTIBLE TO RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IS ENTICING. DURAN FOUND MOROCCAN ATTEMPT TO PORTRAY SAHARA DISPUTE IN TERMS OF EAST-WEST

CONFLICT UNCONVINCING AND NOTED THAT MOROCCAN OPPOSITION LEADERS, INCLUDING COMMUNIST, SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT'S SAHARA POLICY. HE MADE AMUSED REFERENCE TO MOROCCAN COMMUNIST LEADER'S DEFENSE OF GOM SAHARA POLICY IN MARXIST TERMS AND SAID THAT EFFORTS TO SWAY GENERALLY PRO-POLISARIO SPANISH LEFTIST PARTIES WITH THESE ARGUMENTS HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL.

3. DURAN AND ROVIRA EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT EITHER ALGERIA OR MOROCCO COULD GET A RESOLUTION CLEARLY FAVORABLE TO ITS POSITION ADOPTED IN THE UNGA AND AGREED THAT MOST LIKELY OUTCOME (IF THE SAHARA ISSUE SHOULD COME UP AND BE CARRIED THIS FAR) WOULD BE REFERENCE OF PROBLEM BACK TO REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ARAB LEAGUE AND OAU AS HAPPENED AT THE COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT. KISSINGER

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